



# NEWSLETTER

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**Current Central Station 3 Version – 2.6 (13)**  
**Current Central Station 2 Version – 4.3.2 (4)**  
**Current Mobile Station Version – 5.6**  
**Current Wireless MS Version – 5.4.0.21**

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The annual Rocky Mountain Train Show is coming soon, and we will attend once again. This will mark our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary attending this show!

There has been a new update to the CS3. While installing the new update, a few have experienced a bug or two. Please be patient as the factory is aware and working to fix them. As a reminder, it is **always** a good idea to back up your Central Station before installing an update so there is no chance of data loss. It is also a good idea to perform a backup prior to making changes to your layout.

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Our first article is about using an m83 decoder to control uncoupler tracks and our second article explains how to do Software Updates/Backdate with the CS3/CS3+ (how timely!).

### **M83 Uncoupler Control**

I do have to admit that I had not looked at this topic very closely until now. In my mind, I always thought an m84 would be used for an uncoupler track. Since the two units (m83/m84) are similar, I thought I would try it the recommended way with an m83 decoder (60832).

First, I should point out that there is a “Technical Manual” available for the m83 on the Märklin website. This provides more information about possible configurations of the m83 than the manual that comes with the decoder, which is more of an “installation” manual. Below is a link.

<https://static.maerklin.de/damcontent/3b/44/3b44f7c3c18c5d0a2b0c3e377f3df7281570606458.pdf>

Also, in the “Technical Manual” it gives a little information about using an uncoupler. Here is my interpretation of the procedure.

First, I connected the m83 to track power and chose “Discover new mfx items” from the “edit” button at the top of the screen (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1 - “Edit” button.

Now, connect the uncoupler track (24997) to the m83 with the yellow wire in the center and the blue wire to the red or green port, whichever you like. I chose port #2 red and tested it. It worked as it should with a short burst of power then disengaged.

Referring to the technical manual, it says to configure the output to “Sensor Switching” and a period of “15”. Getting into the settings of the m83, I was able to do this. The procedure is as follows.

I selected the “Edit” button again, then selected “Edit Article List” (see Fig. 1). In the edit screen, I selected the m83. At this point I can re-name the outputs, so I called it “UC”, and I can change the icon to an uncoupler (Fig. 2).

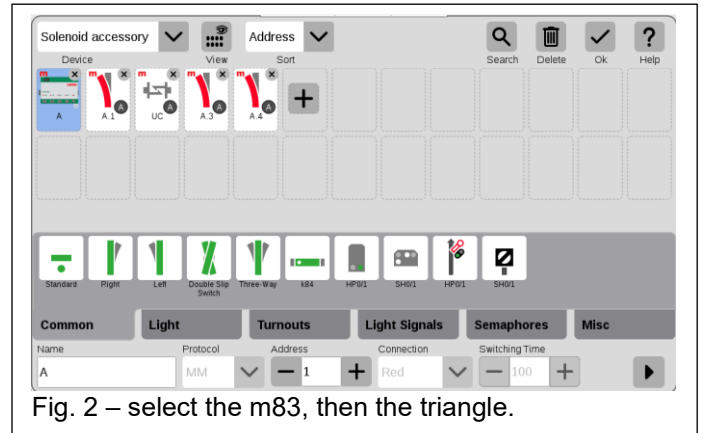


Fig. 2 – select the m83, then the triangle.

Selecting the m83 in the edit screen, I can get into the configuration of the unit. The m83 icon should have a light blue field behind it once it is touched (Fig. 2 again). I then touch the triangle in the lower right of the screen. This gets me into the “Set-up” tab and from there I select the “Configuration” tab, and the CS3 reads the configuration.

Now I select the menu icon in the upper right of the configuration tab and select “Output” (Fig. 3), and verify the port is configured to “Sensor Switching” and change the “Period” to 15 (Fig. 4).

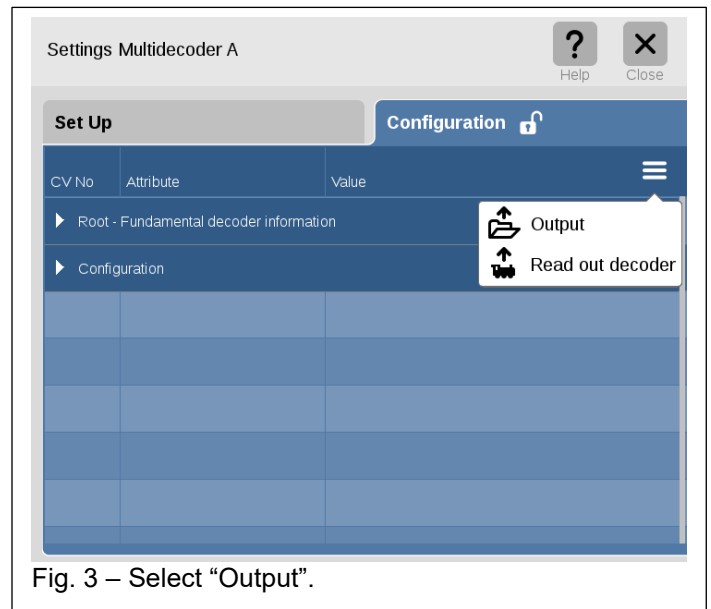


Fig. 3 – Select “Output”.

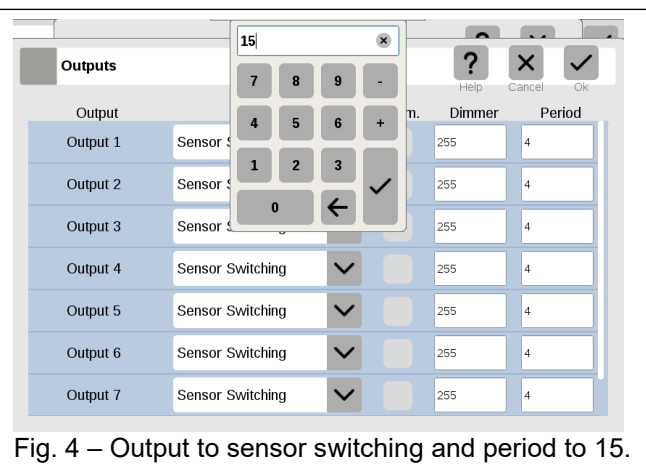


Fig. 4 – Output to sensor switching and period to 15.

Changing the output makes the uncoupler stay activated longer than the default for a turnout. The value can be higher for a longer duration but beware of overheating the solenoid! In this configuration the uncoupler works well and can be added into an event script for automatic uncoupling also.

## Changing the m83 Mode

I was thinking that the m83 has eight ports. In the default mode, the m83 can have two uncoupler tracks per port. The problem is there is no individual control of the red or green output of a single port. The m83 toggles back from red to green. This means that one of two uncouplers will activate back and forth each time the icon is touched on the screen.

A solution might be to configure the m83 for eight outputs. This means that a different mode must be selected in the m83. To do this I need to get back into the configuration tab and select a different mode (Fig. 5). The problem is that the four items of the m83 in the "Article list" do not change to eight items automatically in the "8 address" modes, so the m83 must be deleted after the mode is changed and re-registered for the CS3 to see all eight items. Once I changed the mode, deleted and re-registered the m83, this is what I found.

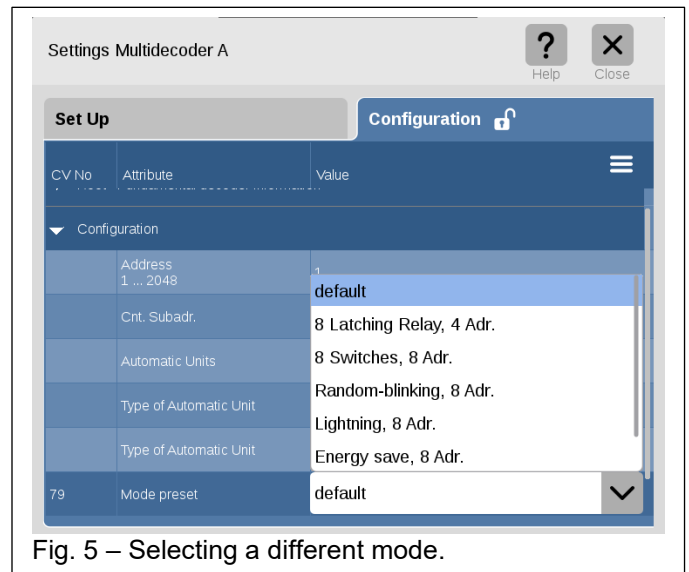


Fig. 5 – Selecting a different mode.

In the Technical manual there is an explanation of the modes. The exact wording for each mode is different than what is in the CS3, but the mode list is in order with the manual.

Mode 0 – Standard Mode – In the CS3 it is named "Default"

Mode 1 – 8 Switches, 4 addresses – In the CS3 it is named "8 Latching Relay, 4 addresses"

Mode 2 – 8 Switches, 8 addresses – In the CS3 it is named "8 Switches, 8 addresses"

Mode 3 – Blinking and random, 8 addresses – In the CS3 it is named "Random-blinking, 8 addresses"

Mode 4 – Neon street lighting – In the CS3 it is named "Lighting 8 addresses"

Mode 5 – Energy Saving Lighting, 8 addresses – In the CS3 it is named "Energy save 8 addresses"

In the CS3 there is also "Mode 6" which is the same as "Default" above as far as I know.

There are several modes that can have eight outputs. There are a few modes that are just not fit for an uncoupler or would need more configuration which in the end, would make them work like one of the other modes, so why waste the time with those modes. These are mode 3, 4, 5, and 6. This leaves us with Mode 0, 1, and 2.

I have already covered mode 0, (default) above. Mode 1 (8 switches, 4 addresses) would work also but it has the same trouble as the default except it activated as green on, red on, green off, red off when the button is pushed. Clearly this is worse than the default button operation. So, mode 1 is out!

Mode 2 (8 switches, 8 addresses) works well and is the only option left. Individual control of each output. One touch on, one touch off from a single button. The drawback is, the uncoupler icon for the button does not activate it. Fortunately, there is an icon “Coupling G1” in the “Misc.” icons tab that operates the uncoupler (Fig. 5). A second drawback is that the button must be pushed again to turn it off. This may not be so bad because there is an element of timing as to when to activate the uncoupler, but again, if it stays on too long it will burn out the solenoid!

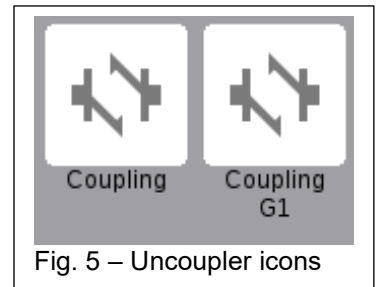


Fig. 5 – Uncoupler icons

The reason the other modes will not work is because of the effects when activating. Some are blinking lights; some are fade-in and others are not suitable due to the button activation. None would be appropriate for an uncoupler.

### The Simple Solution

My simple solution is that a manually operated uncoupler might be the best choice. A 72720 Control Box is best suited for the uncoupler. One button momentary operation of (up to eight) uncouplers. It is simple, much less expensive, takes very little wiring, I do not have to select a page on a screen to operate it, and I can operate a part of my layout like when I was a kid! The only drawback is it cannot be inserted into an event, which eliminated the “timing” aspect of uncoupler event activation, not to mention that the uncoupler is the least used accessory on my layout. So, in short, I am glad I know how this works, but I might activate this accessory in analog just for fun!

**Enjoy your hobbies!**

**Rick Sinclair**

### **Software Updates/Backdate with the CS3/CS3+**

In this edition, I explore requests on the procedure of upgrading the software on your CS3/3+. In general, it is always wise to keep your software current and up to date. There have been instances where a user requests to backdate the software. I will discuss this procedure as well.

As a warning, be cautious when deciding to backdate your software. I would not make any recommendations on whether to do so. There are too many layouts or programming variables that may only be known to the programmers. Also, it may not be the solution for some reasons that you justify for this procedure.

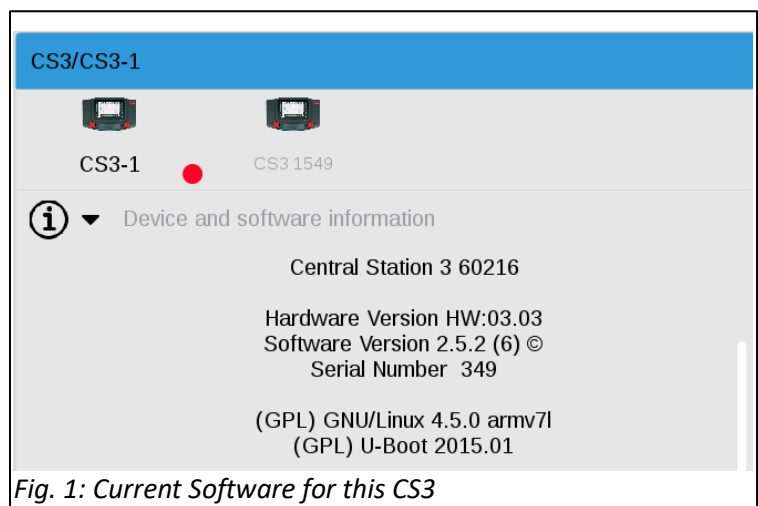


Fig. 1: Current Software for this CS3

To begin with, make sure you create or have a backup of your current system. This is the only safeguard you have should any unexpected faults occur during the procedure. Be sure that your backup has a unique identifying name. In other words, don't just accept the default backup name given by the CS3. The default name does not change, so essentially you are just overwriting a single file repeatedly. You could be saving a bad setup over your last good working version.

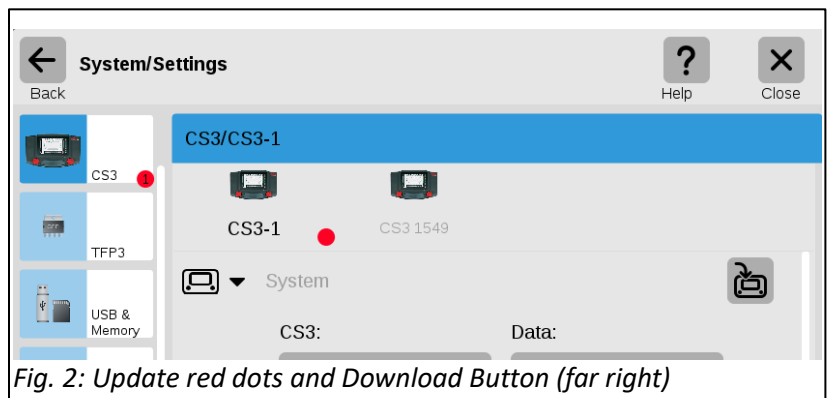
In Fig. 1, you can see my starting point.

This is software version 2.5.2 (6). I will illustrate software versions at each step. I also ran some tests with a posted 2.6.0 version of software.

### Updates and Notifications.

There are two approaches you can take to doing an update. Online with web connection, or offline with USB memory device.

Ideally, you will have your CS3 connected to the internet as this is necessary if you wish the CS3 to monitor for any updates available. It can be the smoothest path to updating your software. Beware, a CS3 connected to a local network that may give you wireless access to the CS3 may not necessarily have internet access.

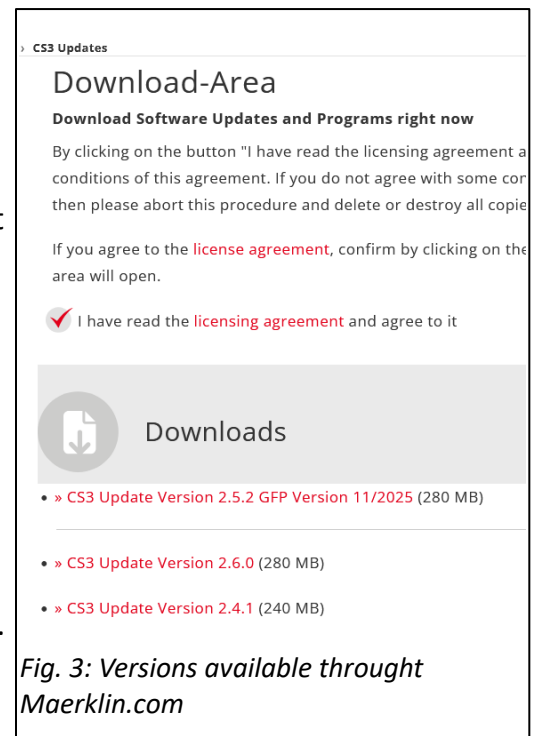


The red dot by the CS3 icon indicates that an update is available. The red dot will display on all the CS3 icons to notify you to enter the system settings where the update button will be revealed. Without an update, the update button is hidden. Fig. 2 shows what the update button looks like. It is the icon on the far right with the downward arrow.

Without a CS3 connection to a network you will have to check for any update changes by looking up the software versions yourself at <https://www.maerklin.de/en/service/downloads/cs3-updates>.

In Fig. 3, I show you the update files that are available for download using the link above. The general content of the page will list the current version of the CS3 software. In this case it is 2.5.2 (6). However, I did find it confusing that there is also a download link for version 2.6.0 and 2.4.1.

There are no details regarding these other versions, so I would keep the following warnings in mind. Backdating your software (i.e. 2.4.1) can be done but beware, any features you may have gotten used to in the current software version may appear to be malfunctioning.

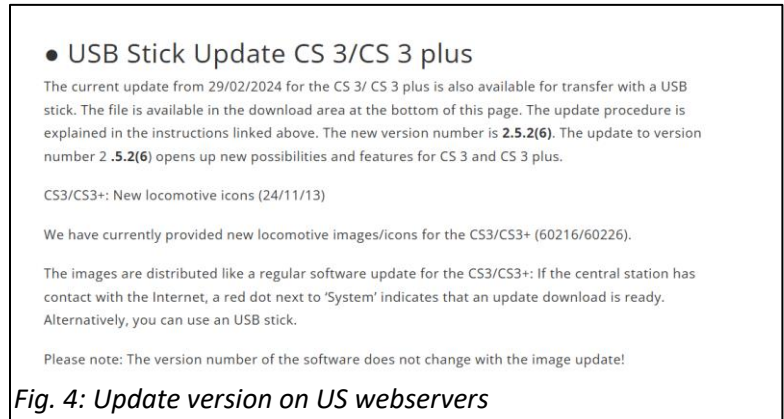


Note that the 'Current Software' listing may differ between what is posted for the web host. The German webservers will list the current version as 2.6.0, while the US servers post it as 2.5.2 (see Fig. 4)

When you click on one of these versions, the file will download immediately and I received a 'no found page' warning, however, the download had completed without issue. I downloaded 5 of the same files with this behavior. Then I remembered to investigate my browser download folder. (This is the kind of thing that drives interface designers nuts).

### Using a USB Memory Device

Once you've downloaded the file on to your computer, you can copy the file from the computer on to the memory device. Do not place this file in a folder on the USB drive, it needs to be seen on the first layer of the USB device to be accessed. I recall that the CS3 does not work so well with large format USB devices. Any USB stick that is 32GB or larger will not be seen. I keep 1.0- 8.0 GB around just for the CS3.



● USB Stick Update CS 3/CS 3 plus

The current update from 29/02/2024 for the CS 3/ CS 3 plus is also available for transfer with a USB stick. The file is available in the download area at the bottom of this page. The update procedure is explained in the instructions linked above. The new version number is **2.5.2(6)**. The update to version number **2.5.2(6)** opens up new possibilities and features for CS 3 and CS 3 plus.

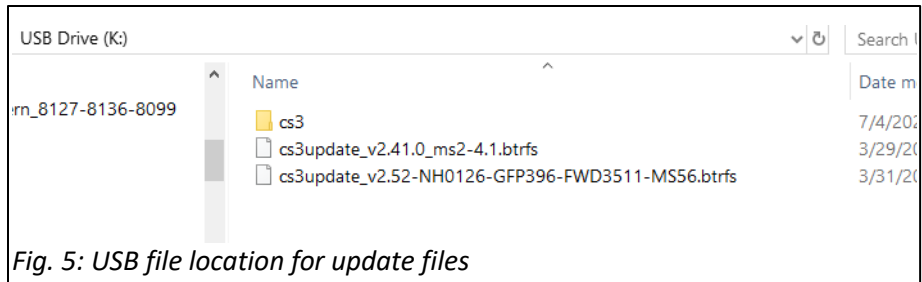
CS3/CS3+: New locomotive icons (24/11/13)

We have currently provided new locomotive images/icons for the CS3/CS3+ (60216/60226).

The images are distributed like a regular software update for the CS3/CS3+: If the central station has contact with the Internet, a red dot next to 'System' indicates that an update download is ready. Alternatively, you can use an USB stick.

Please note: The version number of the software does not change with the image update!

*Fig. 4: Update version on US webservers*



USB Drive (K:) | Search |

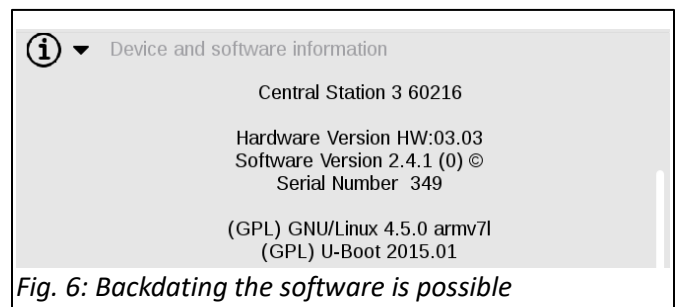
Name	Date modified
cs3	7/4/2024
cs3update_v2.41.0_ms2-4.1.btrfs	3/29/2024
cs3update_v2.52-NH0126-GFP396-FWD3511-MS56.btrfs	3/31/2024

*Fig. 5: USB file location for update files*

In Fig. 5, I illustrate the File location for the downloads onto a USB stick. The illustration shows two update files, however, the CS3 will only recognize one. I deleted the 2.4.1 version for the update procedure as described in the next process, with a loaded 2.6.0 version of software.

Using the USB stick for system software has the benefit of being used for either updating or backdating the system software. If the USB drive has a version that is anything but the software version on the CS3, then the CS3 will enable the update dot and the download button. In Fig. 6, I have installed the older 2.4.1 (0) version of software. This was on a CS3 that still had software version 2.5.2.

Upon further testing, I could not backdate the software on a CS3 that had been updated to 2.6.0. The CS3 did recognize that an update was available, but it did not load and the software remained at 2.6.0. As mentioned before, I swapped the update on my memory stick to only display the 2.5.2 update and tested the backdating again. This time the software was able to replace the 2.5.2 software over the 2.6.0.



Device and software information

Central Station 3 60216

Hardware Version HW:03.03  
Software Version 2.4.1 (0) ©  
Serial Number 349

(GPL) GNU/Linux 4.5.0 armv7l  
(GPL) U-Boot 2015.01

*Fig. 6: Backdating the software is possible*

Curtis Jeung

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## Upcoming appearances:

- **Rocky Mountain Train Show**  
Denver, Colorado  
April 11-12
- **ONLINE Webinar**  
Wednesday, April 8

**To contact Rick and Curtis for help with your Digital, technical and product related questions:**

**Phone: 650-569-1318**

**Hours: 8:00 am – 4:00 pm CT Monday through Thursday**

**8:00 am – 12:00 noon CT Friday**

**E-mail: [digital@marklin.com](mailto:digital@marklin.com)**